

THAT WHICH IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for displaying a set of hierarchical data on an electronic display, the method comprising:

displaying the set of hierarchical data on the electronic display in a tree diagram having a first portion and a second portion;

wherein the first portion of the tree diagram has a plurality of vertically oriented levels; and

wherein the second portion of the tree diagram has a plurality of horizontally oriented levels.

2. The method of Claim 1, wherein at least one element in the set of hierarchical data includes a set of embedded hierarchical data.

3. The method of Claim 2, wherein the set of hierarchical data is displayed in the first portion of the tree diagram, and wherein the set of embedded hierarchical data is displayed in the second portion of the tree diagram.

4. The method of Claim 3, wherein at least one element in the set of embedded hierarchical data includes a second set of embedded hierarchical data, and wherein the second set of embedded hierarchical data is displayed in a third portion of the tree diagram.

5. The method of Claim 1, wherein the second portion of the tree diagram is disposed between two adjacent levels of the plurality of vertically oriented levels.

6. The method of Claim 1, wherein at least one of the plurality of horizontally oriented levels has a first node that is aligned with one of the plurality of vertically oriented levels and a second node that is aligned with a different one of the plurality of vertically oriented levels.

7. The method of Claim 1, wherein the plurality of vertically oriented levels in the first portion of the tree diagram and the plurality of horizontally oriented levels in the second portion of the tree diagram have one or more nodes at each level, and further comprising displaying on the electronic display an

expansion handle icon having a first configuration adjacent at least one of the nodes in the first portion of the tree diagram and displaying on the electronic display an expansion handle icon having a second configuration adjacent at least one of the other nodes in the first portion of the tree diagram.

8. The method of Claim 1, further comprising displaying on the electronic display a plurality of level indicators of a first type that denote respective of the plurality of vertically oriented levels and a plurality of level indicators of a second type that is different from the first type that denote respective of the plurality of horizontally oriented levels.

9. The method of Claim 5, wherein the plurality of vertically oriented levels and the plurality of horizontally oriented levels have one or more nodes at each level, and wherein the method further comprises:

expanding a first of the one or more nodes in a first of the plurality of vertically oriented levels to display at least one of the one or more nodes in a first of the plurality of horizontally oriented levels; and

laterally shifting the displayed plurality of vertically oriented levels that are higher levels than the first of the plurality of vertically oriented levels.

10. The method of Claim 1, wherein the plurality of vertically oriented levels and the plurality of horizontally oriented levels have one or more nodes at each level, and wherein each of the plurality of horizontally oriented levels branch out directly or indirectly from respective ones of the one or more nodes in the vertically oriented levels.

11. The method of Claim 10, wherein the tree diagram includes a third portion that has a plurality of second vertically oriented levels, and wherein each of the plurality of second vertically oriented levels branch out directly or indirectly from respective ones of a group of nodes that comprise part of the second portion of the tree diagram.

12. A method for displaying a set of hierarchical data in which elements of the set of hierarchical data include embedded hierarchical data on an electronic display, the method comprising:

displaying at least part of the set of hierarchical data on the electronic display in a first plurality of levels that have a first orientation upon which the one or more nodes that comprise the level are substantially aligned; and

displaying the embedded hierarchical data embedded in at least one of the elements of the set of hierarchical data on the electronic display in a second plurality of levels that have a second orientation upon which the one or more nodes that comprise the level are substantially aligned;

wherein the second orientation is different than the first orientation.

13. The method of Claim 12, wherein the first orientation is a vertical orientation and the second orientation is a horizontal orientation.

14. The method of Claim 12, further comprising displaying a second set of hierarchical data that is embedded in an element of the embedded hierarchical data in one or more of the first plurality of levels.

15. A graphical user interface for displaying a set of hierarchical data in which elements of the set of hierarchical data include embedded hierarchical data, comprising:

a tree diagram having a plurality of vertically oriented levels that include one or more nodes;

a plurality of horizontally oriented levels that include one or more nodes, wherein each of the plurality of horizontally oriented levels branch out directly or indirectly from respective of the one or more nodes in the plurality of vertically oriented levels.

16. The graphical user interface of Claim 15, further comprising:

a plurality of expansion handles of a first type that are associated with respective of the nodes in the plurality of vertically oriented levels;

a plurality of expansion handles of a second type that is different than the first type that are associated with respective of the nodes in the plurality of vertically oriented levels that contain one of the elements of the set of hierarchical data that includes embedded hierarchical data.

17. The graphical user interface of Claim 15, further comprising:

a plurality of level indicators of a first type that denote respective of the plurality of vertically oriented levels; and

a plurality of level indicators of a second type that is different from the first type that denote respective of the plurality of horizontally oriented levels.

18. The graphical user interface of Claim 17, wherein the plurality of level indicators of a first type comprise a line of a first color and the plurality of level indicators of a second type comprise a line of a different color.

19. The graphical user interface of Claim 15, wherein each of the plurality of horizontally oriented levels is disposed between pairs of adjacent nodes in the plurality of vertically oriented levels.

20. The graphical user interface of Claim 15, wherein at least one of the plurality of horizontally oriented levels has a first node that is aligned with one of the plurality of vertically oriented levels and a second node that is aligned with a different one of the plurality of vertically oriented levels.

21. The graphical user interface of Claim 15, further comprising a plurality of second vertically oriented levels that branch out directly or indirectly from one or more of the nodes in the plurality of horizontally oriented levels.

22. The graphical user interface of Claim 15, further comprising:
a plurality of expansion handles of a first type that are associated with respective of the nodes in the plurality of vertically oriented levels;

a plurality of expansion handles of a second type that is different than the first type that are associated with nodes in the tree diagram from which the nodes in the plurality of horizontally oriented levels branch out from.

23. The graphical user interface of Claim 15, further comprising an expansion handle that is associated with a first node in a first of the vertically oriented levels which may be used to expand the first node to display descendant nodes in both one of the plurality of vertically oriented levels and in one of the plurality of horizontally oriented levels.

24. A computer program product for displaying a set of hierarchical data in which elements of the set of hierarchical data include embedded hierarchical data on an electronic display, the method comprising:

a computer readable medium having computer readable program code embodied therein, the computer readable program code comprising:

computer readable program code configured to display at least part of the set of hierarchical data on the electronic display in a first plurality of levels having a first orientation; and

computer readable program code configured to display embedded hierarchical data embedded in at least one of the elements of the set of hierarchical data on the electronic display in a second plurality of levels having a second orientation that is different than the first orientation.